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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 6, 2015



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New Mexico Economic Development Cabinet Secretary Jon Barela Unanimously Reconfirmed by the State Senate

Santa Fe - Today, the New Mexico State Senate unanimously reconfirmed the appointment of Jon Barela as Cabinet Secretary for the Economic Development Department. Secretary Barela was appointed by Governor Susana Martinez in December 2010 to lead the job creation agency. Since taking office, private-sector job growth has increased, unemployment has decreased and international exports have hit all-time records, including more than doubling exports internationally and quadrupling exports to Mexico.

"Secretary Jon Barela has been a tireless advocate for New Mexico by making our state more competitive, growing and diversifying our private-sector economy to create good paying jobs for New Mexicans," said Governor Susana Martinez. "He has done great work in recruiting businesses to our state in addition to helping local homegrown businesses stay and expand in New Mexico."

"It's been an honor to serve Governor Martinez and the people of New Mexico as we work to create economic opportunities for all New Mexicans," said Secretary Barela. "I look forward to continuing to build on our successes and our initiatives to make New Mexico the best state to work, live and do business."

During his tenure, Barela was instrumental in leading the state's efforts to reform its tax structure by lowering the state's corporate income tax rate 22 percent - from 7.6 to 5.9 percent and implementing a single sales factor which virtually eliminates the tax from manufacturers on products sold out of New Mexico. He has been praised for his work to reduce the regulatory burden on job creators. He established the Office of Business Advocacy within the department to assist businesses navigating the state regulatory, licensing and permitting process which has helped save or create 2,000 jobs.

His efforts to reform New Mexico's tax code has helped bring investments from Union Pacific, TE Connectivity, Honeywell's Bendix/King and Lowe's Customer Contact Center, Canon Information Technology Systems, Google, Franco Whole Foods and international businesses like Turkish CN Wire and German business Certoplast to New Mexico.

Through Barela's leadership, New Mexico moved from 38th to 1st in the country in terms of export growth and has been widely recognized for promoting New Mexico's products and services abroad.

Additionally, he has championed programs to help New Mexico's rural communities through the re-starting of the Rural Economic Development Council, launching the MainStreet Historic Theater Initiative, making investments in USDA-certified commercial kitchens for food entrepreneurs and the creation of "FundIt" to streamline the rural infrastructure development process and tie it to job creation.

Secretary Barela's confirmation sponsors were Senate Pro Tem Mary Kay Papen (D-Las Cruces) and Senator Bill Payne (R-Albuquerque).

Secretary Barela has been an active leader in the state for more than 25 years. He began his career working as an aide for the late Congressman Joe Skeen, practiced law for the Modrall-Sperling Law Firm, and worked as New Mexico's assistant attorney general and director of the civil division. He continued his career as the community and government affairs manager at Intel where he was recognized for his achievement with the Intel Achievement Award, Intel's highest honor. He then started his own small businesses in New Mexico. Barela graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Washington, D.C. with a bachelor's degree in History and Diplomacy and earned his law degree from Georgetown.

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